Preliminary Summary of Information

Submitted to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in June 2004

Chicago Printed String Co. Building

2300-2326 W. Logan Boulevard

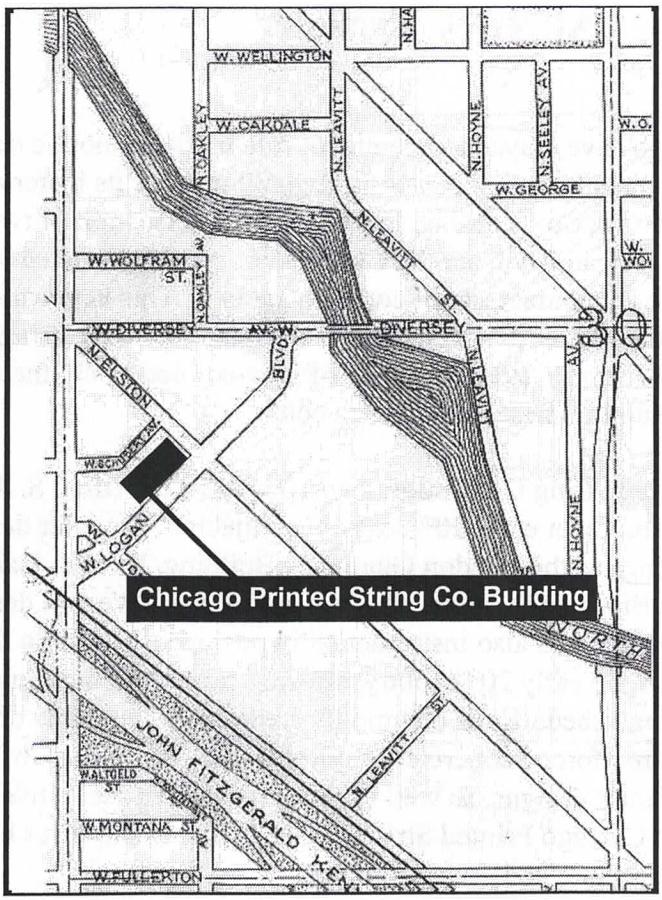
Built: 1928-29 (Additions 1935, 1937, & 1941)
Architect: Alfred S. Alschuler

Industrial buildings have played a preeminent role in the economic development of Chicago, a major manufacturing center throughout most of its history. The two-story Chicago Printed String Co. Building, located at the intersection of two major thoroughfares, W. Logan Blvd. and N. Elston Ave., was constructed in phases between 1928 and 1941 for a manufacturer of cotton tying tape. This tape was made from string and printed with the customer's name – thus the name "printed string" – and used to tie bakery and candy boxes. Clad in a veneer of grey-colored brick, the building features ornamental detailing in limestone and terra cotta.

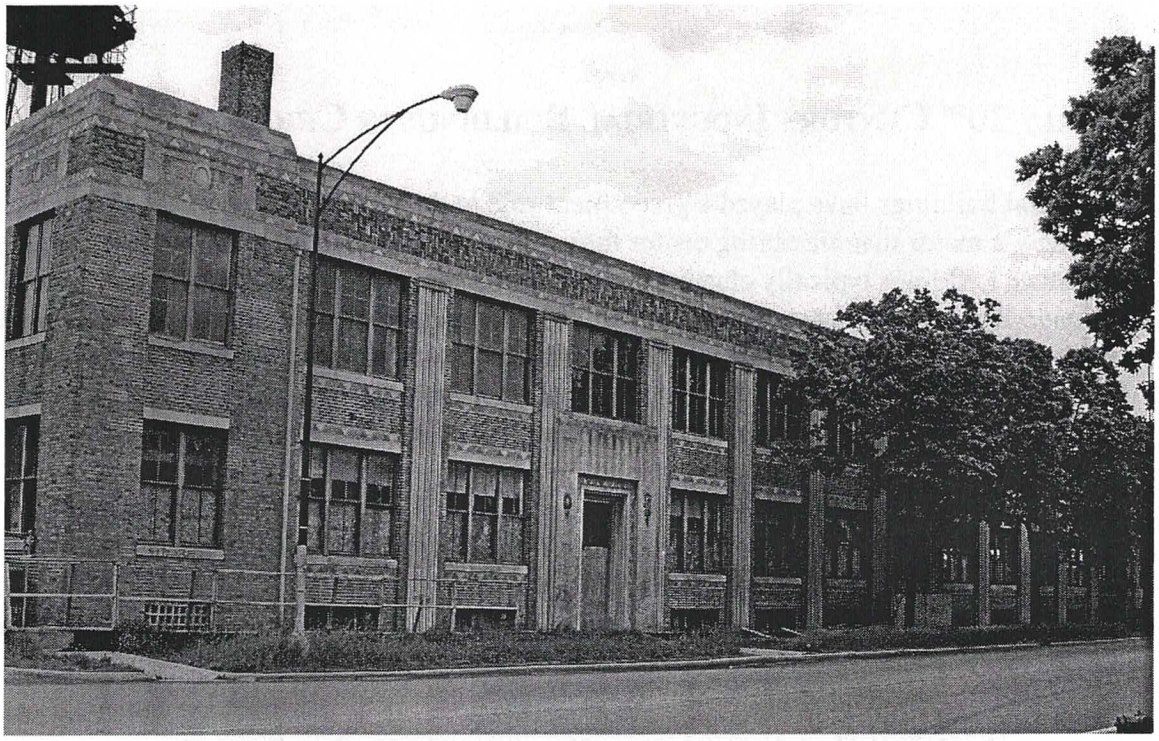
The Chicago Printed String Co. Building was designed by Alfred S. Alschuler, one of Chicago's most prominent early 20th-century architects. Alschuler designed such noteworthy buildings as the London Guarantee Building, K.A.M. Isaiah Israel Temple, and the Goldblatt Brothers Department Store on Chicago Ave., all designated Chicago Landmarks. Alschuler was also instrumental in pushing Chicago to the forefront of industrial design in the early 20th century, creating functional buildings that were aesthetically distinguished. He is commonly credited as being one of the first architects in Chicago to use reinforced concrete for the structural framework of his industrial factory and warehouse designs, as well as promote a more decorative aesthetic to these buildings, and the Chicago Printed String Co. Building exemplifies his thoughts concerning both structure and ornamentation.

A handsome example of a 1920s "modernistic" style, the Chicago Printed String Co. Building combines the sleek, rectilinear forms typical of the Art Deco style along with stripped down Classical-style ornamentation, including handsome, sparely-detailed Classical pilasters. Noteworthy for its quality of materials, detailing and craftsmanship, the building's fine rusticated brick work provides texture to the wall planes, and is laid in a decorative "basketweave" pattern at the frieze level.

The building's most distinctive physical feature is the use of decorative bands of triangular-shaped terra cotta tiles with a green matte finish that ornament the building's main entrance, spandrels, and roofline. The tiles were manufactured by the American Terra Cotta Company, based in Chicago, which produced a wide variety of terra cotta for both building ornamentation and decorative objects. The building's bands of tile appear to be "Teco" pottery, given their color and matte finish and that they were manufactured by American Terra Cotta. Teco pottery is well-known and highly-regarded art pottery of the period. It was produced by American Terra Cotta through a subsidiary, Gates Potteries, and included both art objects (including vases, bowls, and lamps) and tiles used for architectural embellishment. Teco's beautiful green-colored tile and similar tiles were embraced by practitioners of the Arts and Crafts and Prairie style movements, including Frank Lloyd Wright, who was both an admirer and designer of Teco pottery.



Above: The Chicago Printed String Co. Building is located at 2300-2326 W. Logan Boulevard in the Logan Square neighborhood.



The Chicago Printed String Co. Building, erected for a manufacturer of cotton typing tape, is a handsome example of a late 1920s and 30s "modernistic" industrial building. Prominently located on one of the City's boulevards, W. Logan Blvd., at its intersection with N. Elston Ave., the building was constructed in phases between 1928 and 1941. Its earliest section, situated along the western end of the company's Logan frontage (above), was eventually extended east to Elston (below).

EARLY 20TH CENTURY INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS IN CHICAGO

Industrial buildings have played a preeminent role in the economic development of Chicago, a major manufacturing center throughout most of its history. The city's early industrial buildings typically clustered together near transportation corridors such as the Chicago River and railroad lines. By the 20th century, however, light industrial buildings had become part of the larger urban fabric, often constituting noteworthy visual "landmarks" in their surrounding neighborhoods. Their unique structure and design are important components of the city's architectural heritage.

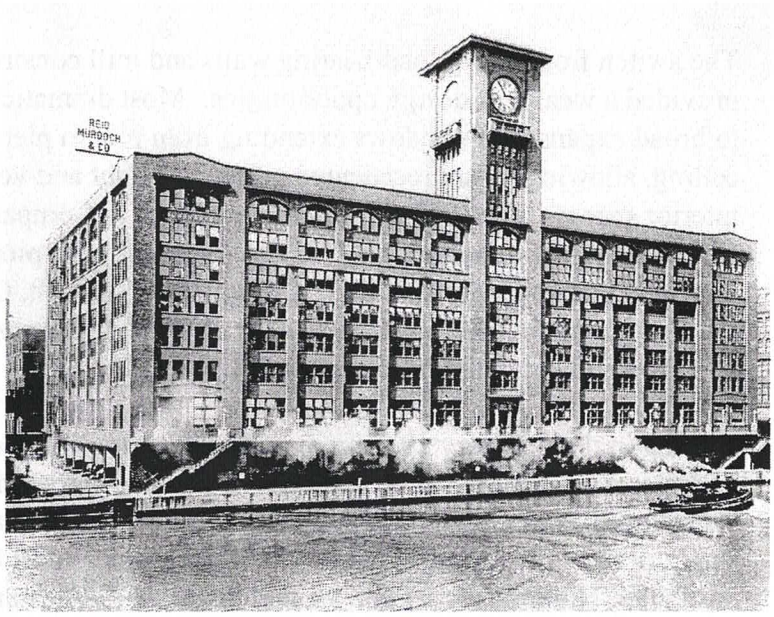
Prominent architects such as Alfred Alschuler, George Nimmons and Richard Schmidt were among those who pushed Chicago to the forefront of industrial design in the early 20th century, creating functional buildings that were aesthetically pleasing. Nimmons emphasized the significance of industrial buildings in his January 5, 1926, article for *The American Architect*:

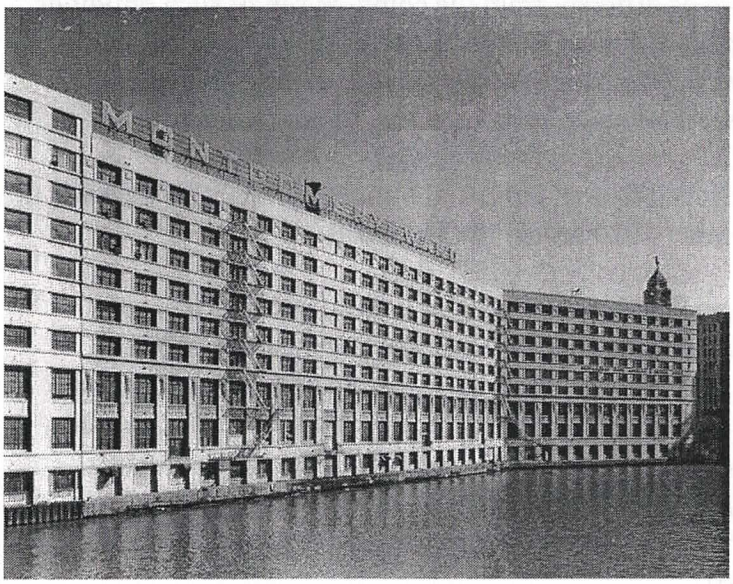
> *"The industries of America more than anything else, have given this country its prominent place among the leading nations of the world, and it is on this account that industrial buildings should stand high in importance in the architecture of this country. Industry occupies a place in the life of the American people that is probably only second to their religion."*

The early 20th century was a period that saw the removal of industry from Chicago's downtown area and its expansion outward into many developing city neighborhoods and planned industrial districts. In fact, some of Chicago's best industrial architecture was on display at the Central Manufacturing District (CMD), the country's first industrial park. Established between 1905 and 1915, the initial 265-acre CMD was bounded by 35th Street, Pershing Road, Morgan Street and Ashland on the City's South Side. In 1915, its western boundary was extended to Western Avenue. The CMD featured standardized buildings constructed on concrete or heavy timber, with pressed brick and terra cotta exteriors. Most of them had six stories and basement and epitomized the multistory "gravity" system of manufacturing.

Along with changes in location, the early 1900s was also a time of change in terms of the design and structure of industrial buildings in Chicago. Both steel-frame and reinforced-concrete construction challenged the old-style loft construction, which featured load-bearing brick walls and an interior structural system of timbers or metal framing. Concrete embedded with steel reinforcement remained a common choice for factory buildings throughout the pre-World War II period. As with steel, reinforced concrete offered great tensile and compressive strength, and the material allowed the use of large windows for maximum daylight and good ventilation. Moreover, reinforced concrete was fireproof.

Industrial buildings have played a preeminent role in the economic development of Chicago. These three examples are all designated Chicago landmarks. Right: The Reid-MurdochBuilding, located at 325 North LaSalle Street, was designed by George C. Nimmons in 1913.





Left: The Montgomery Ward Catalog House, designed by Schmidt, Garden & Martin in 1907-08, is one of the finest industrial examples of the Chicago School style of architecture.

Right: Designed by Howard Van Doren Shaw and Charles Z. Klauder between 1912 and 1929, the R. R. Donnelley & Sons Calumet Plant exeplifies the industrial gothic style.

The switch from heavy load-bearing walls and mill construction to reinforced concrete provided a wealth of design opportunities. Most dramatically, walls could be opened up to broad expanses of windows extending from pier to pier and nearly from floor to ceiling, allowing an unprecedented amount of light and ventilation to permeate the interior spaces. The 1907-8 Montgomery Ward & Company Catalog House at 600-18 W. Chicago Avenue (a designated Chicago landmark) is a pioneering example of large-scale reinforced-concrete construction. Designed by Schmidt, Garden & Martin, the 1.25-million square foot warehouse and office building features expansive stretches of broad windows and naturalistic terra-cotta ornamentation.

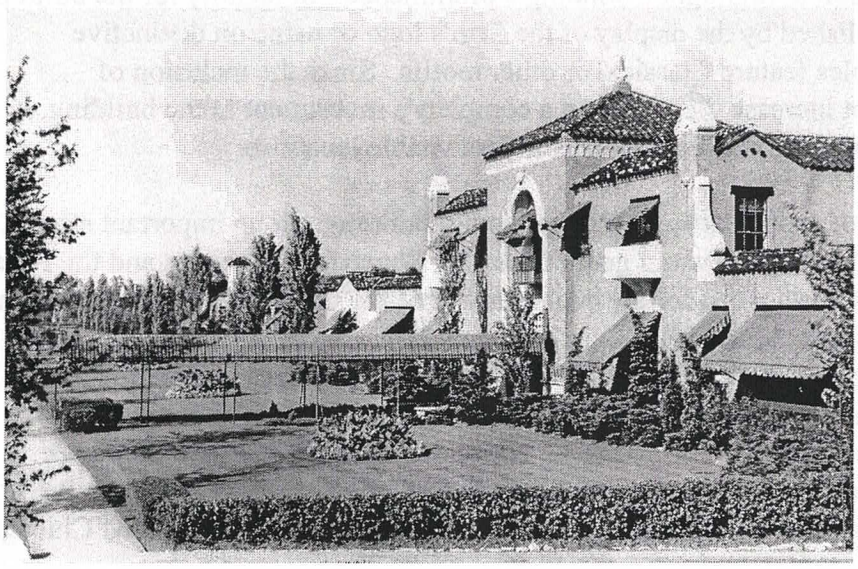
Writing in the February 1910 issue of *The Architectural Record*, Chicago architect Peter Wight argued that the public appreciated good utilitarian design that was unornamented, yet relieved from monotony through its good proportions alone. In the same article, Wight praised the industrial work of several architectural firms, including Alfred Alschuler, Nimmons and Fellows, and Schmidt, Garden and Martin, noting that their work "will at once be recognized as different from the common run of such buildings." Wight believed that these and other Chicago architects shared a common approach to industrial design, going so far as to proclaim the creation of a unified movement "on account of its having been the work of many persons acting almost simultaneously."

Alfred S. Alschuler, for one, believed that all industrial buildings should be assets to the cityscape, as noted in his September 1923 article for *The Inland Printer*:

> *"A handsome building is an asset which should not be ignored. It should not be secured, however, at a disproportionate first cost or at the expense of operating economy. A treatment I have used successfully in a number of cases is a combination of terra cotta and concrete, which gives the general effect of a full terra façade at a much lower cost. The use of terra cotta for the first one or two floors and for the cornice or coping, with some molding of the concrete on the intermediate floors, has proved both economical and attractive."*

Alschuler was not alone in his determination to raise the design standard of industrial buildings. George Nimmons argued that although the industrial building is typically, "the ugliest and most objectionable building in the community," it was perfectly feasible to make most industrial buildings and their surroundings "not only attractive but sometimes even beautiful in their architecture and landscape effects," without any increased expense.

The accepted appearance for an early 20th-century industrial building was one that expressed strength, stability and function through its grid-like elevations and eschewed the use of lavish or extensive ornamentation. In Chicago, most early 20th century industrial structures, regardless of the construction type, were sheathed with brick. Interest was often created by the addition of specially colored brick and light-colored terra cotta to the façade. During the late 1920s and into the 1930s, many industrial buildings



Chicago is home to many fine low-rise industrial buildings, which stand as a visual representation of the city's manufacturing legacy. The buildings are located throughout the city's neighborhoods and were designed to accommodate a variety of industries including paper making, confectionary production, and food processing. Clockwise from above: 2611-17 West Chicago Avenue is designed in the Art Deco Style. The Cromwell Paper Company Building is located on Chicago's South Side and is designed in the Spanish Baroque Style. Designed with flamboyant Art Deco polychrome terra cotta, Richter's Food Products, Incorporated is located in the heart of the Randolph Street market area. The M& M Mars Candy Plant, a Chicago institution, is located at 2019 N. Oak Park Avenue.

featured the streamlined, geometric forms typical of the Art Deco style, sometimes combined with stripped down Classical-style detailing. Often, the corners of buildings and/or their vertical piers were accentuated through the use of Classical-style pilasters in concrete or stone, which led the eye upward and minimized the appearance of the structural grid.

Industrial buildings situated in prominent locations, such as along Chicago's major avenues and boulevards or in downtown Chicago adjacent to the Chicago River, typically featured greater ornamentation than the more utilitarian buildings found elsewhere. Architects used such elements as clock towers, terra-cotta detailing or ornamental brickwork or decoration to highlight a building's prominence. An identity for the building was sometimes established by the display of the firm's logo or name on distinctive signage; other examples feature Classical or other motifs. Since the inclusion of ornamentation did not increase the return on a company's investment in the building, it tended to be absent from utilitarian buildings in less visible locations.

Such embellishment of prominently located industrial buildings along important streets, including the City's boulevards, was a goal of the City Beautiful movement and the Plan of Chicago of 1909, which called for the enhancement of the City's streetscapes through the construction of high-quality architecture both downtown and along outlying thoroughfares. Examples of such high-quality industrial architecture include the Reid-Murdoch Building (now the Reid-Murdoch Center), on the Chicago River between N. Clark and N. LaSalle streets (1914, George C. Nimmons) and the R. R. Donnelley & Sons Co. Calumet Plant (now the Lakeside Technology Center) at 350 E. Cermak Rd. (1912-24, Howard Van Doren Shaw, 1929, Charles Z. Klauder), both designated Chicago Landmarks.

Along with the Chicago Printed String Co. Building, several comparable one- and two-story industrial buildings from the 1920s and 30s were documented by the Chicago Historic Resources Survey. These include the Mars Candy Co. plant at 2019 N. Oak Park Ave. (1928, J. B. Jorgensen); the Borden's Dairy Farm Product Co. of Illinois building at 4800 S. St. Louis Ave. (1928, E.C. Roberts); the Crystal Pure Candy Co. building at 2611-17 W. Chicago Ave. (1930, R. B. Kurzon); the Richter's Food Products Co. building at 1032-40 W. Randolph St. (1931, H. Peter Henschien); and the Cromwell Paper Co. building at 4801-09 S. Whipple St. (1932, A. Epstein).

In more recent years, dozens of the city's industrial buildings have been reincarnated as loft condominiums and offices. These powerful structures, many of which feature high quality design and craftsmanship, remain among Chicago's most valuable architectural assets.

Building History and Construction

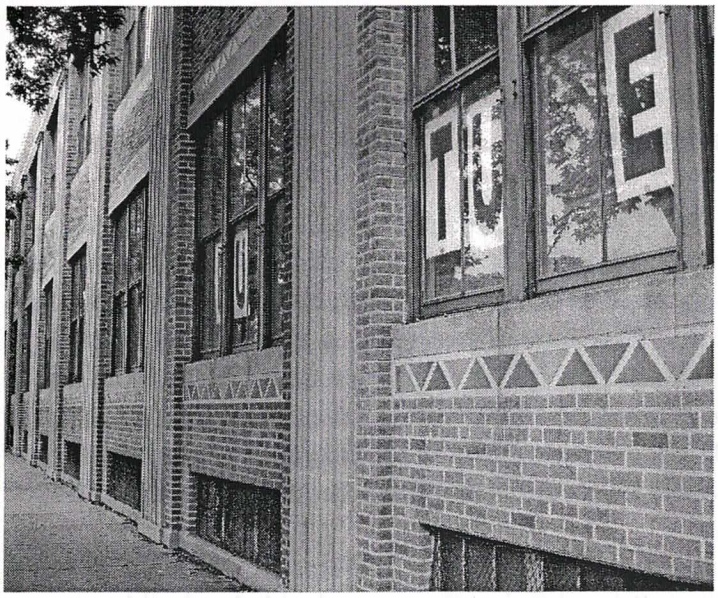
The Chicago Printed String Co. Building was constructed in phases between 1928 and 1941 for a manufacturer of cotton tying tape. Cotton tying tape was made from string and printed with the customer's name, and used to tie bakery and candy boxes. The company was founded in 1898 as the Victor Tape Company in Prague (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, now Czech Republic). The initial product produced by the company was a cotton tape used as hat bands in men's and fashionable ladies' hats. Upon establishing itself in Chicago in 1915, the company continued to produce industrial tape products. It is noted for being a pioneer in the gift-wrapping industry as a producer of ribbons, bows and gift-wrapping paper.

Anticipating rapid growth, the Chicago Printed String Company decided to build a new factory in the late 1920s and selected a large site with room for expansion on one of the City's boulevards, W. Logan Blvd., at its intersection with N. Elston Ave. Additions to the original two-story factory—located along the western end of the company's Logan frontage—were intended from the start. The two-story building was extended to the north and east along Holly and Schubert Avenues in 1935 and 1937, then eastward to Elston in 1941, creating its current L-shaped form. Clad in a veneer of grey-colored brick over a concrete structure, the building features ornamental detailing in limestone and terra cotta, has a flat roof, and is set on a concrete foundation.

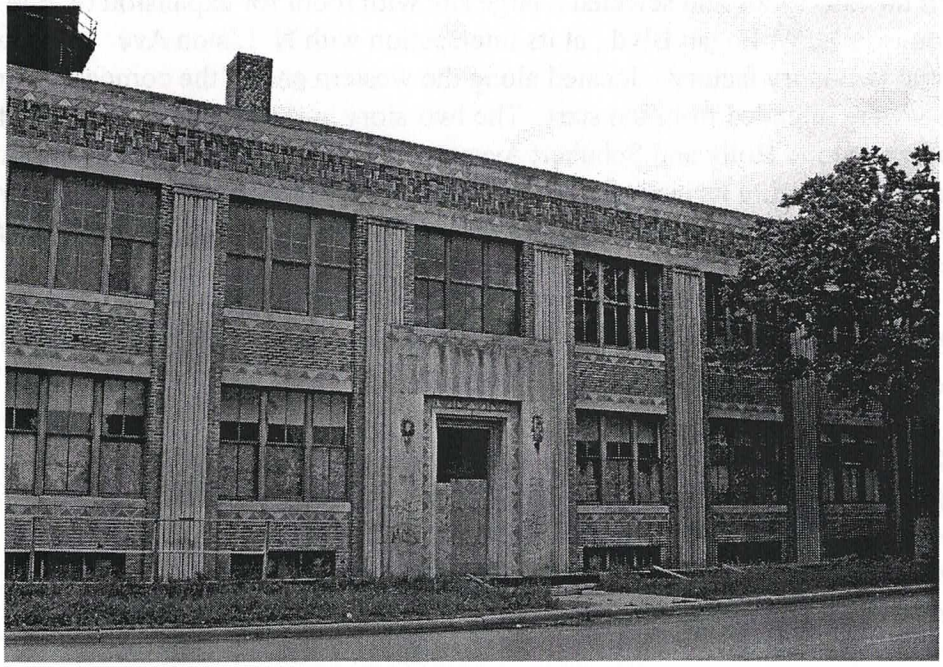
A July 29, 1928 article in the *Chicago Tribune* reported on the construction of the first section of the Chicago Printed String Co. Building:

> *When the [Chicago Printed String] company began business about 14 years ago it had a capacity of 50,000 yards a day. When its new plant is completed, the capacity will be 1.5 million yards daily and ultimately this is to be three million yards. It is stated the firm now makes seventy per cent of all the tape of this type in the country.*
>
> *The first floor will have the offices and storage space. The second floor will be occupied by the machines turning out the tape, many of which are imported from Europe. The cost of the building exclusive of the land, will be $180,000.*

The Chicago Printed String Co. Building is a handsome example of a 1920s "modernistic" building, combining the streamlined, geometric forms typical of the Art Deco style with stripped down Classical-style detailing, and illustrates Alschuler's ideas about structure and aesthetics as pertaining to industrial buildings. A style originally based on French design as seen at the 1925 Exposition des Arts Decoratifs in Paris, Art Deco was further developed by American architects in the 1920s as a rectilinear, abstract and "modernistic" style that employed smooth materials and had a sleek, machine-



The Chicago Printed String Co. Building combines the sleek, rectilinear forms of the Art Deco style with the stripped down Classical-style ornament typical of Modern Classicism, both "modernistic" architectural styles of significance to Chicago architecture.



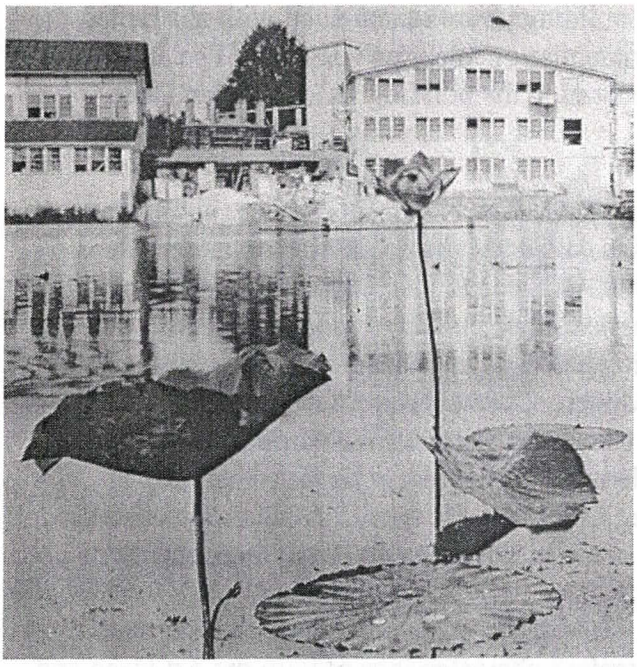
finished appearance. Often Art Deco-style buildings were ornamented with abstracted foliate or geometric ornament, especially triangular or "chevron" designs. The abstracted foliate details and triangular tile courses decorating the building reflect the Art Deco influences on the building's design.

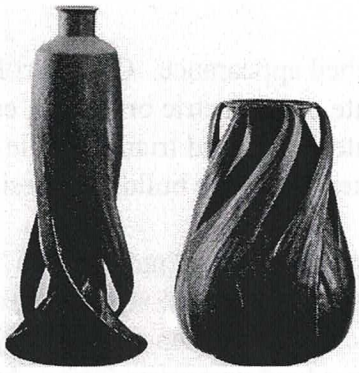
In addition, many "modernistic" buildings of the 1920s and 30s also utilize simplified, abstracted Classical-style design. Sometimes called "Modern Classicism," this style is associated and often seen in conjunction with Art Deco in that both styles emphasize clean-edged geometric forms. Modern Classical-style buildings utilize "modernized" Classical details for ornamentation, including pared-down pilasters, capitals, and decorative friezes. Architects working in Modern Classicism were working to create up-to-date buildings that would embrace both Classicism—one of the world's greatest and longest-lasting design traditions—and modernism. A popular style for industrial buildings such as the Chicago Printed String Company, Modern Classicism was also used in the late 1920s and 30s for office towers, schools, governmental buildings, and retail buildings.

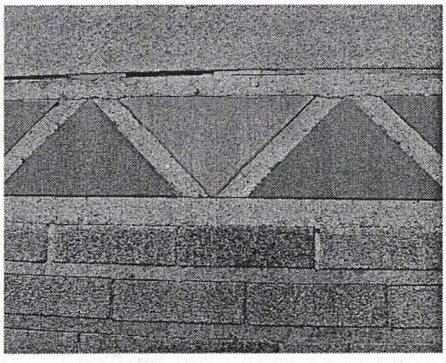
The Chicago Printed String Co. Building displays characteristics of both the Art Deco and Modern Classical architectural styles, both in its overall form and ornamentation, as applied to an industrial building. The brick-clad elevations along Logan and Elston feature flattened, geometric stonework, including limestone sills and lintels. The main Logan entrance is surrounded by smooth limestone enlivened by green terra-cotta tiles. The building's rectilinear stonework includes the use of Classical pilasters, which lead the eye upward and minimize the appearance of the structural grid. The emphasis on vertical lines is another Art Deco motif. The building's roofline is also enlivened by medallions ornamented with abstracted palm fronds and additional terra-cotta tiles.

The Chicago Printed String Co. Building exhibits fine design and craftsmanship in both materials and detailing. Laid in a running bond, the building's brick work is rough-textured, adding visual interest to the wall planes. Every sixth course is laid in a Flemish bond, a pattern that features alternating stretchers and headers. The brickwork in the frieze band is laid in a decorative "basketweave" pattern. This kind of brick work, with its emphasis on color and texture, reflects the on-going influence of the Arts and Crafts movement, which strongly influenced American architecture with its emphasis on the innate decorative qualities of building materials.

Especially distinctive are the bands of triangular-shaped terra cotta tiles that enliven the entrance, spandrels and roofline along the main elevations facing Logan and Elston. The green matte-finished tiles were intended to give the visual, abstract impression of printed string—the product produced by the company. The tiles were manufactured by the American Terra Cotta Company, founded by William Day Gates in 1881 to produce drain tile, brick, and architectural terra cotta. Located near Crystal Lake, Illinois, the company's products were in great demand by architects. Alfred Alschuler was one of the American Terra Cotta Company's best clients, using its tiles on 134 of his buildings.







The American Terra Cotta Company (top), located in Terra Cotta, Illinois (near Crystal Lake), produced the triangular -shaped terra cotta tiles that ornament the building's main entrance, window spandrels, and rooftop parapet. These tiles, with their green matte finish, have a similar color and finish to, and most likely are, Teco pottery, the company's famed art and architectural pottery (top right). Teco and similar tiles were much prized by architects associated with the Arts & Crafts and Prairie movements, including Frank Lloyd Wright.

Chicago's leadership in the architectural terra cotta industry is evidenced by the thriving business enjoyed by the area's four major terra cotta firms. In addition to the American Terra Cotta Company, these included the original Chicago Terra Cotta Company, its successor the Northwestern Terra Cotta Works, and the Midland Terra Cotta Company. Lightweight, easily molded and inexpensive, terra cotta quickly became a highly popular material used for cladding and ornamentation on some of the City's most prominent buildings from the late 1880s through the 1930s.

The tiles that grace the Chicago Printed String Co. Building have a simple green matte finish that is similar in color and appearance to Teco pottery produced by Gates Potteries, an offshoot of the American Terra Cotta Company. Teco was one of the leading types of art pottery produced in early 20th-century America. Given both the physical similarity, and that the building's tiles were produced by American Terra Cotta which produced Teco tiles for architectural decoration, it is likely that the building's tiles are Teco. The name "Teco" is derived from "Te" in Terra and "Co" in Cotta. Famous for its green matte glazes and the creativity of its various forms, Teco pottery is typically defined as geometric, organic or architectural, and was used for both decorative objects and architectural tile. Teco and similar tiles were much favored by practitioners of the Arts and Crafts and Prairie style movements, including Frank Lloyd Wright, who was both an admirer and designer of Teco pottery.

Architect Alfred S. Alschuler

Alfred S. Alschuler (1876-1940), the architect of the Chicago Printed String Co. Building, was one of Chicago's most prominent early 20th-century architects. Born in Chicago to German immigrant parents, Alschuler received bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from the Armour Institute of Technology (now the Illinois Institute of Technology), and also took classes at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1900 he began his professional career in the office of Dankmar Adler, and subsequently worked with both Adler and Samuel Atwater Treat until 1907, when he established an independent practice.

Although a specialist in the design of industrial buildings, Alschuler also received a wide variety of commissions, including office towers, synagogues, libraries, automobile showrooms, and hotels. By 1913, his practice was well established, with an office staff of forty. In 1926, Alschuler issued a job book with photos of dozens of buildings and numerous advertisements by appreciative contractors and suppliers.

Through the course of his career, Alschuler designed dozens of industrial buildings throughout Chicago, many of which were located in the Central Manufacturing District. A *Chicago Daily News* article from January 23, 1937, noted Alschuler's contributions to the city's industrial architecture:

"Many of the improvements in industrial and commercial buildings in Chicago can be attributed to the genius of Alfred S. Alschuler, one of the city's prominent architects. During the course of thirty-five years or so he has introduced to Chicago such items of far-reaching importance as the extensive use of reinforced concrete in buildings, multicolored terra cotta, and standardized office-building units.

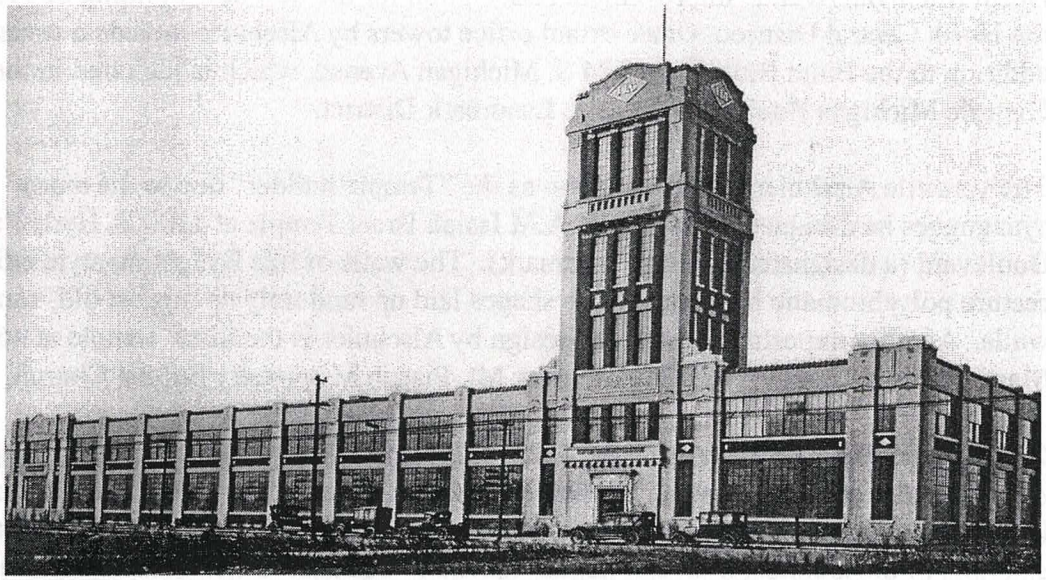
"He recalled today his daring adventure of the year 1900 when he used reinforced concrete in the foundation of the department store at 12th and Halsted Streets, to the dismay of cynics. He also was one of the first to divide a Chicago office building into units of 17 feet each, a measure now accepted as the standard requirement."

Alschuler is commonly credited as being one of the first architects in Chicago to use reinforced concrete as the structural framework for his industrial factories and warehouses. He believed that the necessary features of industrial design were clear floor spaces and excellent natural lighting, both achievable with reinforced-concrete structures, and visual attractiveness. He achieved unobstructed floor spans by grouping together all utilities, such as elevator shafts, stairways, and restrooms, so as not to interfere with the clear floor spaces. Building exteriors were then ornamented with a variety of decorative motives, often in terra cotta, illustrating the belief that industrial buildings should be aesthetically pleasing. The Chicago Printed String Co. Building exemplifies this design philosophy.

Alschuler's philosophy of building design as applied to industrial buildings is exemplified by the Columbian Colortype Company Building at 320 E. 21st Street (1920, extant but remodeled with a rooftop addition for loft apartments), which features several innovations that became standard industry practice. Entrance, docks, stairwells, and all services were pushed to the west wall to minimize interference with clear floor spaces and natural lighting. Economical flat-slab concrete construction reduced vibration from traffic outside and manufacturing equipment inside. The concrete columns were exposed on the main elevations so that—when used in combination with terra cotta detailing at the base, entry and cornice—the effect of a totally brick and terra-cotta façade was achieved without its expense. Today, the Columbian Colortype Building is greatly modified from its original appearance, due to its conversion to residential lofts.

Alschuler's John Sexton & Company Building at 500 N. Orleans Street (1916, 1919) is a dark red brick-clad building with creamy terra-cotta detailing. Built by a grocery and food processing company for use as its office, manufacturing plant and warehouse (now condominiums), this building represents the final stage in Chicago loft construction. Unlike the previous generation of lofts, the elevations not only reflect the various uses of the interior space, but also identify stairwells, light shafts and elevators. The 1919 addition, which added the easternmost 150 feet, matched the original building's load-bearing walls, even though the structural system was now concrete.

Alfred S. Alschuler, designer of the Chicago Printed String Co. Building, was one of Chicago's most prominent early 20th-century architects. His Chicago industrial buildings reflected his design philosophy that these buildings should be both functional and aesthetically pleasing. Noted examples include the Ilg Electric Ventilating Company at 2850 N. Pulaski Road (middle; demolished) and the John Sexton & Co. Building at 500 N. Orleans Street (bottom photos; now condominiums).



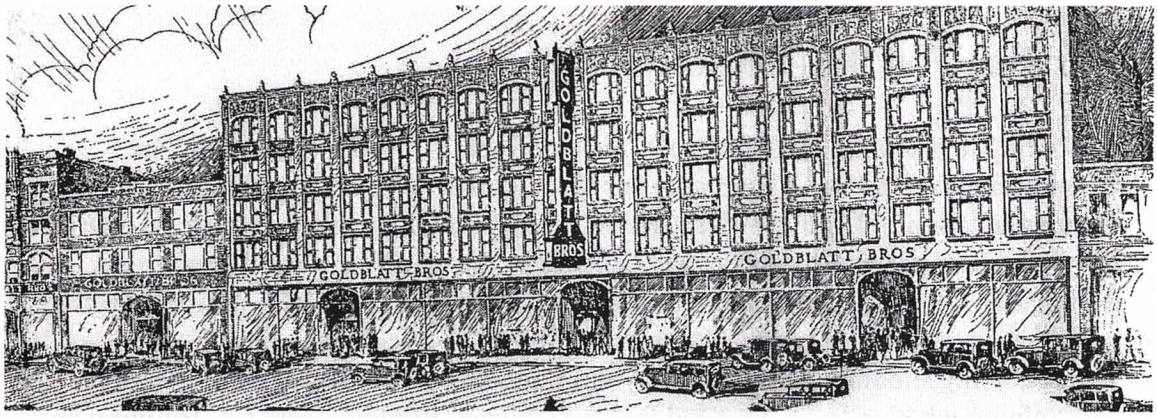
A biographical sketch of Alschuler in the Art Institute of Chicago's 1982 publication titled, *Chicago Architects Design: A Century of Architectural Drawings from the Art Institute of Chicago*, remarks:

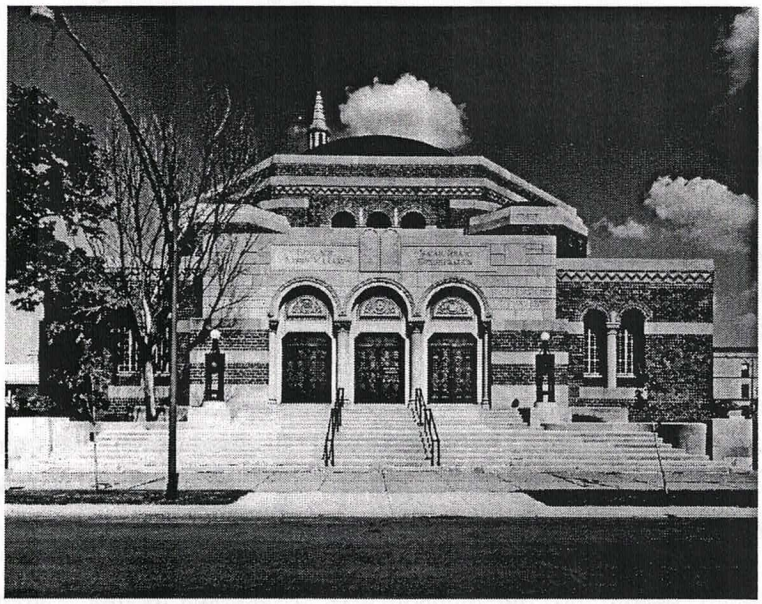
> *"At a time when the city was developing an industrial fringe of unattractive functional buildings, Alschuler's harmonious and refined designs and restrained Classical detailing were changing the texture of the city."*

The London Guarantee Building (1923) at 360 N. Michigan Avenue (a designated Chicago landmark) was Alschuler's most important commission. Commanding an important setting just across the Chicago River from the Wrigley Building and the Tribune Tower, the 22-story building features a concave façade and is topped by a cupola replicating a Greco-roman lantern. Its design earned Alschuler a gold medal from the North Michigan Avenue Improvement Association for the best new building of 1923 in the North Central District. Other extant office towers by Alschuler include a seven-story addition to the Blum Building at 624 S. Michigan Avenue, which is included in the Historic Michigan Boulevard Chicago Landmark District.

The versatile Alschuler was also known as the "Temple builder" due to the many synagogues he designed, including K.A.M Isaiah Israel Temple at 1100 E. Hyde Park Boulevard (a designated Chicago landmark). The walls of this Byzantine-style edifice feature polychromatic brick in various shapes laid up randomly to suggest old, sun-baked walls. Another important synagogue design by Alschuler is the Sinai Temple at 4622 S. Martin Luther King Drive (1909-12), now Mt. Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church.

Goldblatt Brothers Department Store (1921-22 and 1925-28) at 1613-35 W. Chicago Avenue (a designated Chicago landmark)—comprising a brick structure with a much larger five-story terra-cotta-clad annex, both designed by Alschuler—is an excellent example of the architect's several department store designs. Other notable buildings by Alschuler include the Legler Regional Library at 115 S. Pulaski (1919) and the Henry W. Austin Public Library at 5615 W. Race (1928), both designed in the Beaux Arts style. Alschuler's 1930 Harrison Hotel at 63 E. Harrison Street is a high-style Art Deco edifice replete with stylized foliage, while automobile showrooms for the Hudson and Marmon automobile-manufacturing companies, located in the 2200-block of S. Michigan Ave. (both from 1922) feature exuberant terra cotta ornamentation.





Although Alschuler specialized in industrial architecture, he also received a wide variety of commissions, including office towers, synagogues, libraries, automobile show-rooms and hotels. His noteworthy designs include the Goldblatt Bros. Department Store on Chicago Avenue (top), the K.A.M. Isaiah Israel Temple (middle), and the London Guarantee Building (bottom), all designated Chicago landmarks.

Criteria For Designation

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sect. 2-120-620 and –630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for a building, structure, object, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Chicago Printed String Co. Building be designated a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

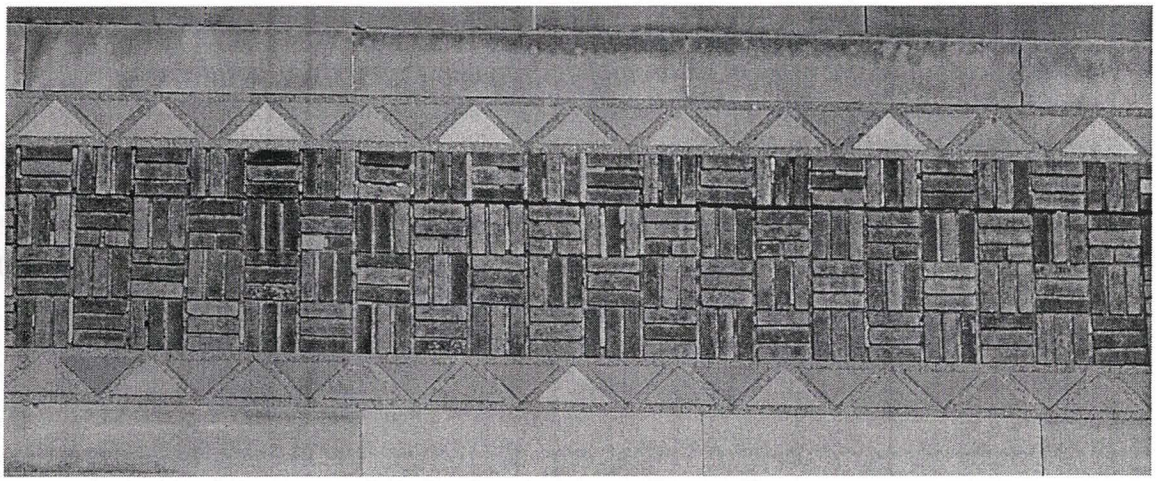
Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

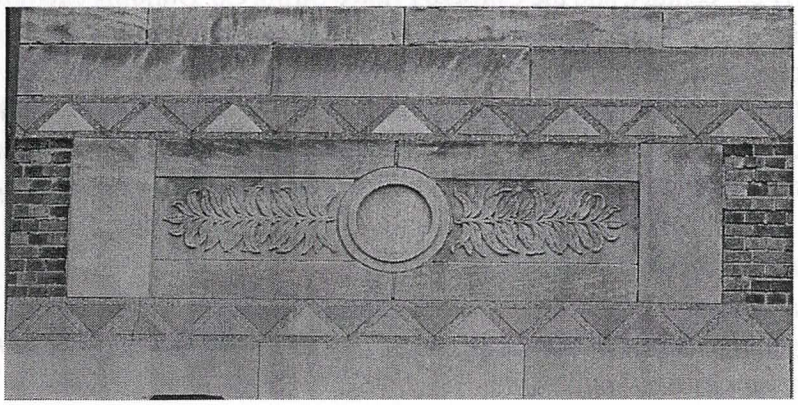
- The Chicago Printed String Co. Building, built for a manufacturer of cotton tying tape, is a handsome example of a late 1920s and 30s "modernistic" industrial building type and architectural style of importance to Chicago history.

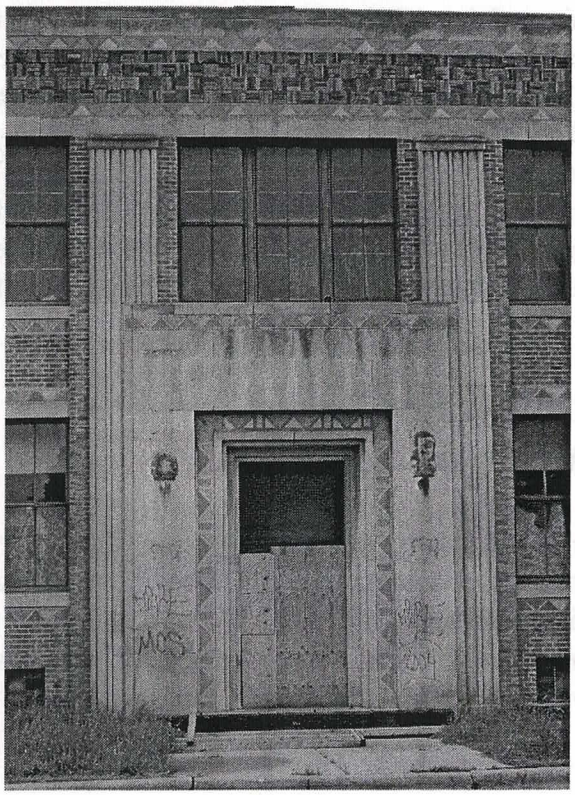
- The building combines the sleek, rectilinear forms and abstracted foliate and geometric ornament typical of the Art Deco style, along with stripped down Classical-style ornament typical of Modern Classicism, both "modernistic" architectural styles of significance to Chicago architecture.

- The building exhibits high quality design and craftsmanship in both materials, including stone, brick and terra cotta, and detailing, including Classical fluted pilasters, abstracted foliate ornament executed in limestone, and brick work in a handsome "basketweave" design.

- The building is distinguished by bands of triangular-shaped terra cotta tiles ornamenting the building's main entrance, window spandrels, and rooftop parapet. These tiles, with their green matte finish, were the product of the American Terra Cotta Company, one of Chicago's important manufacturers of terra cotta. It has a similar color and finish to, and most likely is, "Teco" pottery, the company's famed art and architectural pottery and one of the leading types of art pottery produced in early 20th-century America. Teco and similar tiles were much prized by architects associated with the Arts & Crafts and Prairie movements, including Frank Lloyd Wright. American Terra Cotta, through its Gates Pottery subsidiary, produced Teco terra cotta for both art objects, such as vases and lamps, and architectural tiles.







The Chicago Printed String Co. Building exhibits high quality design and craftsmanship in both materials, including stone, brick and terra cotta, and detailing, including Classical fluted pilasters (right), abstracted foliate ornament executed in limestone (middle), and brick work in a handsome "basketweave" pattern (top).

Criterion 5: Important Architect

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Alfred S. Alschuler, the designer of the Chicago Printed String Co. Building, was one of Chicago's most prominent early 20th-century architects, designing such noteworthy buildings as the London Guarantee and Exchange Building, K.A.M. Isaiah Israel Temple, and the Goldblatt Brothers Department Store, all designated Chicago Landmarks.

- Alschuler was one of Chicago's leading, innovative designers of industrial buildings in the early 20th century, and the Chicago Printed String Co. Building exemplifies his design philosophy of innovative reinforced-concrete construction and handsome ornamentation as applied to industrial buildings. He is commonly credited as being one of the first architects in Chicago to use reinforced concrete as the structural framework for his industrial factories and warehouses. His designs were both functional and attractive, often featuring vertical bands of windows and brick piers with handsome terra-cotta detailing.

Integrity Criteria

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic value.

The Chicago Printed String Co. Building displays good integrity, displayed through its siting, scale, and overall design in its historic relationship to the surrounding Logan Square community area. The building retains its historic exterior form, materials and detailing, including grey-colored brick walls, fluted Classical pilasters, and triangular, green-colored terra-cotta tiles accentuating the building's entrance, spandrels and roofline. Exterior alterations include the replacement of original entrance doors along Logan and Elston, and removal of a metal grille and original light sconces that once flanked the Logan entrance. A section of the roof and wall at the rear of the structure was removed during demolition before it was halted.

Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its evaluation of the Chicago Printed String Co. Building, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building.

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Illustrations
Department of Planning and Development, Landmarks Division: pp.5, 7, 17 (middle).
Jean Guarino for the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, pp.3, 10, 12 (bottom, middle right), 19.
From: Zukowsky, Chicago Architecture 1872-1922: pp. 15 (middle, bottom).
From Darling, Chicago Ceramics & Glass: pp. 12 (left, top).
From Chicago Daily News: p. 17 (top).
From Saliga, Pauline (ed.). The Sky's The Limit. NY: Rizzoli, 1992: p. 17 (bottom).

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending tot he City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-2958) TTY; (312-744-9140) fax; web site, http:www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks.

This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the City Council's final landmark designation ordinance should be regarded as final.